

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 05966 01 OF 02 081908Z

45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 FSI-01 PM-07

INR-10 IO-14 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 DRC-01

DPW-01 PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-20 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

/156 W

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O R 080930Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4423

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

CIA

DIA

JCS

JUSMAAG

WHITE HOUSE

USAJFKCMA

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PAGE 02 SAIGON 05966 01 OF 02 081908Z

CINCPAC

CINCPACAF
CO 7 PSYOPS GP
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSARPAC
DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG UDORN
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USDAO/SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 5966

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PFOR ECON VS
SUBJ: EMBASSY SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY MAY 2-8 1974

BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
DOD FOR USAJFKCMA ATTN: ATCS-WL-DSA

THE WEEK IN SUMMARY

THE CEASEFIRE

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CEREMONIES ILLUSTRATE BUDDHIST DISUNITY

MRS NGO BA THANH LEADS A DEMONSTRATION ON BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY

"MARTELL CONVOY" TRIAL POSTPONED ONCE AGAIN

GVN ON FISHERIES DISPUTE WITH THAILAND

TOGO'S PRES TO VISIT VIETNAM

FIRST IRANIAN AMB PRESENTS CREDENTIALS

GVN TO BE PREPRESENTED AT COSTA RICAN INAUGURATION

PLANNING MINISTER TO LOBBY IN WASHINGTON

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 05966 01 OF 02 081908Z

PRICES

BLACK MARKET CURRENCY AND GOLD PRICES

I. INTERNAL

A. THE CEASEFIRE

INCIDENTS IN MR-1 INCREASED SLIGHTLY AND AGAIN WERE AT A RECORD HIGH FOR THE YEAR. WHILE AREAS IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE CONTINUED TO BE A MAJOR FOCUS OF COMMUNIST ATTACKS, HAMLETS IN NORMALLY QUIET QUANG TIN ALSO WERE TARGETED BY THE COMMUNISTS. MR-2 WAS AGAIN RELATIVELY CALM WITH NO MAJOR MILITARY CONTACTS REPORTED DURING THE WEEK.

THE AREA AROUND THE PARROT'S BEAK ALONG THE CAMBODIAN BORDER IN MRS 3 AND 4 CONTINUED AS THE CENTER OF LARGE-SCALE MILITARY ACTIVITY. REGIMENTAL-SIZED ACTIONS INVOLVING THE NVA 5TH DIVISION, WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARING NEW ATTACKS ON THE GVN RANGER BASE AT DUC HUE, AND ARVN UNITS FROM MRS 3 AND 4 RESULTED IN SERIOUS LOSSES TO THE NVA DIVISION AND SUCCEEDED IN LIFTING THE SIEGE OF DUC HUEJM ELSEWHERE IN MR3 THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS DROPPED AND THE INTENSITY OF MILITARY ACTIVITY DROPPED.

MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR4--EXCLUSIVE OF THE OPERATIONS TAKING PLACE IN THE AREA OF THE PARROT'S BEAK--ALSO DECLINED, WITH ONLY KIEN PHONG PROVINCE EXPERIENCING AN UNUSUALLY HIGH LEVEL OF INCIDENTS.

IN VINH LONG PROVINCE AT SONG PHU VULLAGE, HOWEVER, ANOTHER SCHOOL WAS SHELLED BY THE COMMUNISTS ON MAY 4 AND SEVEN SCHOOL CHILDREN WERE KILLED AND 36 OTHERS WOUNDED. INDONESIAN AND IRANIAN OFFICERS CARRIED OUT AN ON-SITE "OBSERVATION" OF THE SCHOOL. ICCS REPS FROM THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN ICCS CONTINGENTS REFUSED TO VISIT THE SITE OF THE ATROCITY.

FOLLOWING THE MORTARING OF THE SONG PHU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THE VISIT BY INDONESIAN AND IRANIAN OFFICERS FROM ICCS REGION VII, RVN SPOKESMEN AND PRESS STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE HUNGARIANS AND POLES FOR NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE INVESTIGATION.

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PAGE 04 SAIGON 05966 01 OF 02 081908Z

THE US HAS NOTIFIED THE ICCS AND THE GVN OF OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSED ICCS BUDGET OF \$24,590.982 FOR THE ICCS FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING APRIL 1.

ACCORDING TO THE GVN DEL TO THE TPJMC, THE HUNGARIANS AND POLES ARE REOCCUPYING TEMA SITES THEY LEFT ON APR 30 FOR MAY 1 CELEBRATIONS. TALKS WITHIN THE TPJMC REMAINED STALEMATED OVER THE ISSUE OF PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.

B. BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CEREMONIES ILLUSTRATE BUDDHIST DISUNITY

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS TOOK PLACE IN SOUTH VIETNAM MAY 6. UNLIKE LAST YEAR, WHEN THE QUOC TU AND AN QUANG FACTIONS HELD A LARGE JOINT CELEBRATION IN SAIGON AS A GESTURE OF UNITY, THE TWO FACTIONS THIS YEAR HELD SEPARATE CELEBRATIONS. THIS

INDICATES THE DEGREE TO WHICH LAST YEAR'S AN QUANG-QUOC TU
UNITY MOVEMENT HAS DISSIPATED. HOWEVER, VENERABLE TAM CHAU, THE
QUOC TU LEADER, DID ISSUE PUBLIC APPEALS FOR BUDDHIST UNITY
BOTH BEFORE MAY 6 AND DURING THE CELEBRATIONS ON THAT DAY.

THERE WAS ALSO DIVISION WITHIN AN QUANG ITSELF OVER THE
CELEBRATIONS. ABOUT HALF A DOZEN AN QUANG CHAPTERS IN SAIGON
REFUSED TO JOIN THE CENTRAL CELEBRATION AT THE AN QUANG
PAGODA. THESE CHAPTERS APPEAR TO BE AMONG THOSE LED BY THE
DISAFFECTED SOUTHERN WING OF AN QUANG. THAT WING HAS OBJECTED
TO THE COM
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PAGE 01 SAIGON 05966 02 OF 02 081144Z

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 AID-20 EB-11 FSI-01 PM-07

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DPW-01 PRS-01 OMB-01 SS-20 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

/156 W
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O R 080930Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4424
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
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AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USDEL JEC PARIS UNN
CIA

DIA
JCS
JUSMAAG
WHITE HOUSE
USAJFKCMA
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 05966 02 OF 02 081144Z

CINCPAC
CINCPACAF
CO 7 PSYOPS GP
CINCPACFLT
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DEPCHIEF JUSMAAG UDORN
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USDAO/SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 5966

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PFOR ECON VS
SUBJ: EMBASSY SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY MAY 2-8 1974

BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
DOD FOR USAJFKCMA ATTN: ATCS-WL-DSA

IN FRONT OF PASSING VEHICLES. AS USUAL, THE FOREIGN PRESS HAS
REPORTED A "PROTEST DEMONSTRATION" WITHOUT NOTING THE
PATHETICALLY SMALL NUMBER OF PROTESTORS AND THE TOTAL APATHY
AND/OR DISRESPECTFUL AMUSEMENT WITH WHICH THEY WERE REGARDED BY
THE INDIFFERENT SAIGON PASSERS BY.

D. "MARTELL CONVOY" TRIAL POSTPONED ONCE AGAIN

THE "MARTELL CONVOY" SMUGGLING TRIAL (SEE SAIGON 3887 AND
SUBSEQUENT REPORTING) HAS BEEN POSTPONED FOR THE THIRD TIME.
THE TRIAL RECONVENED MAY 2, BUT A DEFENSE LAWYER PROMPTLY
CHALLENGED THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE MR3 MILITARY FIELD
COURT HEARING THE CASE. THIS ISSUE NOW PASSED TO THE SUPREME
COURT FOR DECISION ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS, AND THE TRIAL IS
SUSPENDED UNTIL THE ISSUE IS SETTLED.

AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THE PRIMARY BASIS OF THIS CHALLENGE
WAS THAT DECREE-LAW 13/72 OF SEPTEMBER 16, 1972 (THE MOST
RECENT LAW GOVERNING THE COMPOSITION OF MILITARY FIELD COURTS)
IS ALLEGED TO BE NULL AND VOID BECAUSE IT WAS PROMULGATED UNDER PRES
THIEU'S SIX-MONTHS GRANT OF EMERGENCY POWERS IN 1972. DEFENSE
COUNSEL'S ARGUMENT WAS THAT THE ENTIRE GRANT OF EMERGENCY POWERS
IN 1972 WAS AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL DELEGATION OF LEGISLATIVE
CONFIDENTIAL
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PAGE 03 SAIGON 05966 02 OF 02 081144Z

AUTHORITY.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THIS UNCONSTITUTIONALITY ARGUMENT WAS A COMMON OPPOSITION THEME IN 1972 WHEN THE EMERGENCY POWERS WERE GRANTED, FEW SERIOUS CHALLENGES OF THE SIXTY DECREE-LAWS PROMULGATED UNDER THE SPECIAL POWERS HAVE BEEN MADE SINCE. WE EXPECT THAT THE SUPREME COURT WILL UPHOLD DL 13/72. THE MAIN UNCERTAINTY IS WHEN THE SUPREME COURT WILL ACT. PAST EXPERIENCE CAUSES SOME OBSERVERS TO EXPECT A LONG DELAY. MUCH MAY DEPEND ON HOW STRONGLY PRES THIEU LETS IT BE KNOWN HE WANTS AN EARLY RESOLUTION OF THE MATTER.

II. EXTERNAL

A. GVN ON FISHERIES DISPUTE WITH THAILAND.

ON MAY 7 THE GVN SPOKESMAN TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE GVN FOMINISTRY WAS CONSIDERING A COMMUNICATION RECEIVED FROM THE GOVT OF THAILAND ON THE SUBJECT OF FISHING RIGHTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWED A REPORT FROM BANGKOK (FBIS D 030556) THAT THAILAND WOULD BE MAKING A REQUEST FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT AS A RESULT OF GVN NAVY ACTIONS AGAINST THAI FISHING BOATS. COMMENT: THIS PROBLEM IS BASICALLY DUE TO A GVN ACTION TAKEN IN LATE 1972 CLAIMING AN EXCLUSIVE FISHING ZONE OF FIFTY MILES OFF OF ITS EAST COAST AND OF AND AREA CORRESPONDING TO ITS CONTINENTAL SHELF CLAIM (WELL OVER FIFTY MILES) IN THE GULF OF SIAM. END COMMENT.

B. TOGO'S PRES TO VISIT VIETNAM.

OFFICIAL VIETNAM PRESS ANNOUNCED ON MAY 3 THAT TOGO'S PRES EYADEMA HAD ACCEPTED AN INVITATION TO VISIT VIETNAM, TENDERED TO HIM BY ROVING GVN GOODWILL ENVOY SENATOR DAN VAN SUNG.

C. FIRST IRANIAN AMB PRESENTS CREDENTIALS.

IRAN'S FIRST AMB TO VIETNAM MOHSAN SADIGH ESFANDIARI, RESIDENT IN BANGKOK, PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO PRES THIEU ON MAY 3. THE GVN HAS HAD NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADORS ACCREDITED TO IRAN SINCE 1963 AND WILL ACCREDIT A RESIDENT AMB IN TEHRAN VERY SHORTLY.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 SAIGON 05966 02 OF 02 081144Z

D. GVN TO BE REPRESENTED AT COSTA RICAN INAUGURATION.

THE GVN WILL BE REPRESENTED AT THE INAUGURATION OF COSTA RICA'S NEW PRES BY ITS MIN OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS HO VAN CHAM AND ITS PERMANENT OBSERVER AT THE UN, NGUYEN HUU CHI. COMMENT/ THIS

IS ONE MORE MANIFESTATION OF THE GVN'S MORE ACTIVE DIPLOMACY, COUNTERING THE "PRG'S DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE", AND ALSO AN INDICATION OF ITS INTEREST IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION WHERE IT WOULD LIKE TO OPEN A MISSION. END COMMENT.

END CONFIDENTIAL

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

III. ECONOMIC

A. PLANNING MINISTER TO LOBBY IN WASHINGTON

COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF PLANNING, NGUYEN TIEN HUNG, DEPARTED SAIGON MAY 7 FOR WASHINGTON TO LOBBY FOR ECONOMIC AID TO VIETNAM. ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS AT THE PLANNING DIRECTORATE, HUNG WILL SPEND ABOUT TWO WEEKS IN THE US, MAINLY TO SEEK CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE FY 74 SUPPLEMENTAL AND THE FY 75 AID BILL FOR INDOCHINA, WHICH INCLUDES US\$750 MILLION IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM. HUNG IS A FORMER PROFESSOR AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY. HE RETURNED TO VIETNAM LAST YEAR AND SERVED ON PRES THIEU'S STAFF PRIOR TO HIS CURRENT APPOINTMENT.

B. PRICES

BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY COMMEMORATION BROUGHT A LULL IN MARKET ACTIVITY MAY 6, AND THE WEEKLY USAID PRICE SURVEY SHOWED A 0.4 PERCENT DROP IN THE CONSUMER INDEX. ALL OF THE DECLINE APPEARED IN THE FOOD CATEGORY. MEAT AND FISH PRICES DIPPED AS MANY CONSUMERS MARKED THE HOLIDAY WITH THE TRADITIONAL VEGETARIAN DIET. MOST FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRICES WENT UP, PREDICTABLY, BUT RICE AND NON-FOOD ITEMS WERE UNCHANGED.

C. BLACK MARKET CURRENCY AND GOLD PRICES

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 05 SAIGON 05966 02 OF 02 081144Z

GOLD AND DOLLAR TRADING WAS ALSO QUIET DURING THE HOLIDAY. US\$100 GREEN COMMANDED NO HIGHER THAN THE OFFICIAL RATE OF 620/1\$1, WHILE US\$10 WAS SELLING AT ONLY 616/\$1. GOLD, AT US\$151.17 TROY OUNCE, WAS UP SLIGHTLY FROM THE PREVIOUS WEEK. MARTIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INFILTRATION, COMMUNISTS, GROUND COMBAT OPERATIONS, PRICES, MASSACRES, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SAIGON05966
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740111-1210
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740564/aaaacfkwl.tel
Line Count: 376
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: SED TO JOIN THE CENTRAL CELEBRATION, AT THE AN QUANG
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <06 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EMBASSY SAIGON'S MISSION WEEKLY MAY 2-8 1974 BANGKOK ALSO PASS OSA; DEPT ALSO FOR AID/W; CINCPAC FOR POLAD;
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, ECON, VS
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